

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Environmental Justice Small Grants Program

In 2010, the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice received a grant for the "Hartford Recycles" project to educate 900 residents on how to recycle, to protect local air quality by reducing the amount of trash burned at the city's incinerator.

Malama Learning Center Small Grant Success Story

In 2010, with a \$25,000 Environmental Justice Small Grant award, the **Malama Learning Center** formed a partnership with Leeward Community College, as well as local businesses, government and community groups to launch the Hawaii Green Collar Institute. The purpose of the institute was to engage high school and college students in learning about public health and environmental issues affecting their communities.

Students learned about pollution problems facing their communities, conducted team-based research projects, and received training to become better prepared to enter Hawaii's green collar job industry. In March 2011, the Institute honored its first graduating class of 36 students, 40% of which were of Native Hawaiian descent.

The Institute supported its students' transitions into the workforce by offering them counseling services that included job bulletins to alert them of **green job** openings, resume writing workshops, job practice interview sessions, and career fair opportunities.



HGCI student receiving a graduation certificate.

About The Small Grants Program

In 1994, the EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (EJ) established the small grant program to provide financial assistance to community based organizations, and local and tribal governments who work on local solutions that address local environmental or public health issues. Since the program's inception, the EPA has awarded nearly \$23M to 1253 grant recipients who have educated and empowered their communities to understand and address exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks. The Office of Environmental Justice works to ensure that the program helps to build the capacity of communities and supports the creation of self-sustaining community based partnerships that address environmental and public health issues.

Supporting Community-Based Action Programs

Following the announcement of seven top EPA priorities in 2010, the Agency's Administrator, Lisa P Jackson directed National Program Managers and Regional offices to address the needs of overburdened communities by reducing environmental burdens, expanding environmental benefits, and by working alongside them to build healthy, sustainable, and green communities. In working alongside them, the Agency recognizes that communities must also be engaged and empowered to drive local solutions.

As an important element of the Agency's environmental justice strategy (**Plan EJ 2014**), providing support for community based action through financial assistance programs helps to strengthen communities' capacity to address pollution problems. The EJ small grants program is one of numerous programs that support community empowerment and provide benefits that range from basic educational and leadership development to more comprehensive approaches.

Is My Organization Eligible?

An eligible applicant **MUST BE** one of the following entities:

1. Incorporated, non-profit, community-based organizations. This includes environmental justice networks, faith based organizations and those affiliated with religious institutions;
2. Federally recognized tribal governments; OR
3. Tribal organizations

An eligible applicant must also be located within the same state, territory, commonwealth, or tribe that the proposed project will be located; federally recognized tribal governments; or able to demonstrate that it has worked directly with the affected community.

How To Apply

To find the application and more information, visit environmentaljustice/grants

*Did You
Know?*

EPA awarded EJ grants to local organizations to help communities affected by the BP oil spill. Funds were used to help address and adapt to the spill's long-term effects.





How Have Grants Been Used?

As part of the small grants program, the Office of Environmental Justice places emphasis on meeting the Agency's priorities. Among the Administrator's top seven priorities are: reducing greenhouse gas emissions; improving air quality; managing chemical risks; cleaning up hazardous waste disposal sites; protecting America's water; expanding the conversation on environmentalism and working for environmental justice; and building strong state and tribal partnerships.

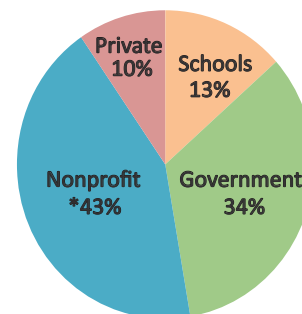
During 2010, the EPA provided funding to support 76 projects distributed across 32 states. The types of projects and priorities supported included:

- ▶ **14 projects that reduced greenhouse gas emissions.** *Little Village Environmental Justice Organization* received funding to reduce air emissions by weatherizing 100 housing units, and working with the Chicago Transit Authority to begin a new 12-mile cross-town bus service that will serve 300,000 people in seven Chicago community areas.
- ▶ **18 projects that managed chemical risks.** The *Philadelphia Department of Public Health* used an environmental justice grant to provide outreach support and training for children and pregnant women at-risk and/or affected by lead exposure.
- ▶ **10 projects that cleaned up hazardous-waste disposal sites.** To increase community involvement and understanding of the environmental and public health problems associated with landfills, *Citizens' Environmental Coalition (CEC)* educated citizens, students, teachers and community activists in the City of Geneva, New York, to help the community contribute solutions on how to control, reduce or eliminate the threat of living with these hazards.
- ▶ **8 projects improved air quality.** *Communities United for Action* provided education and outreach to four low-income communities on how to protect families from air toxics in Mill Creek Valley, OH, and developed strategies to reduce air pollution.
- ▶ **10 projects that protected America's water.** In Richmond, California, The *Watershed Project* used a grant to create a greenway garden as a low-impact way to remove storm water pollutants, as well as to encourage green approaches to cleaning storm water. Recently, the project expanded its efforts by partnering with the City of Oakland to manage the Department of Public Works' Rain Barrel Program.
- ▶ **16 projects that focused on addressing climate equity, energy efficiency, renewable energy, local green economy, and green jobs capacity.** An award on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota funded the *Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation* to provide training on community energy use, organic gardening, and opportunities for green-jobs.



Grant Partnerships

EPA awarded \$1.8 million in grants to 76 grant recipients who partnered with 313 stakeholder organizations, averaging four partners per project.



* Percent of groups represented in partnerships

There was a wide array of partnerships from all sectors, including:

Nonprofits: Grassroots groups, community councils, community health centers, development corporations

Educational Institutions: K-12 schools and universities, technical and vocational institutes

Government: Federal, state and local governments, advisory commissions, task forces, planning committees

Private: Farmer's markets, construction companies, local businesses, consulting firms

Geographic Makeup

